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Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 06065 301639Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1345
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU, CY
SUBJECT: FURTHER REACTION TO ECEVIT STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT

REF: A. ATHENS 5944, B. ATHENS 6025

1. SUMMARY: MUCH OF THE GREEK POLITICAL WORLD COMMENTED PUBLICLY YESTERDAY (JUNE 29) ON TURKISH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT OUTLINING HIS GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM (REF A). WHILE PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS CONFINED HIS BRIEF COMMENT TO UNDERLINING THAT GREECE, TOO, WAS DETERMINED TO PROTECT HER INTERESTS, OPPOSITION LEADERS WERE SOMEWHAT MORE AGGRESSIVE IN REACTING TO ECEVIT'S STATEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS COMMENTED AS FOLLOWS YESTERDAY IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT HIS REACTION TO THE POSITIONS TURKISH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT TOOK IN HIS STATEMENT ON GREEKATURKISH ISSUES: "MR. ECEVIT CERTAINLY HAS THE RIGHT TO PROTECT HIS COUNTRY'S INTERESTS. HE SHOULD KNOW, HOWEVER,
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 06065 301639Z

THAT GREECE IS ALSO DETERMINED TO PROTECT HER OWN (INTERESTS). THE PROBLEM, THEREFORE, SEEMS TO LIE IN A CORRECT AND HONORABLE ASSESSMENT OF THE INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES." ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO "DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES IN ATHENS," BUT WHICH WERE PROBABLY MADE BY A GOVERNMENT SOURCE, SUPPLEMENTED THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS: "THE MANNER IN WHICH THE TURKISH PRIME MINISTER PRESENTS THE WELL-KNOWN GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES DOES NOT ALLOW

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

MUCH OPTIMISM WITH REGARD TO THEIR SETTLEMENT. IT WOULD HAVE
BEEN BETTER IS MR. ECEVIT HAD AVOIDED REFERENCES TO 1974."
ACCORDING TO THE SEMI-OFFICIAL ATHENS NEWS AGENCY BULLETIN,
"DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS" CLARIFIED THAT CARAMANLIS' REMARKS
DID NOT MEAN THAT GREECE RULES OUT A DIALOGUE WITH TURKEY BUT
THIS DEPENDED ON WHETHER TURKEY WAS INTERESTED IN GENUINE
NEGOTIATIONS AND THERE WAS AN AUTHORITATIVE NEGOTIATOR TO
DEAL WITH ON THE TURKISH SIDE.

3. GEORGE MAVROS, HEAD OF THE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION PARTY, USED
THE FORUM OF THE FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION LUNCHEON YESTERDAY
TO STATE HIS VIEWS (REF B). IN A WELL-PUBLICIZED ADDRESS,
MAVROS CALLED ON ECEVIT TO WITHDRAW TURKISH TROOPS FROM CYPRUS AS
A FIRST STEP IN AN EFFORT TO RESTORE GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS.
WHILE HE WAS CRITICAL OF ECEVIT'S STATEMENTS REGARDING CYPRUS,
MAVROS ALSO SAID THE PROSPECTS OF A SOLUTION OF THE CYPRUS
ISSUE MAY BE REGARDED AS MORE PROMISING TODAY THAN THEY HAVE
BEEN" SINCE ECEVIT, IF HIS GOVERNMENT SURVIVES, COULD BE THE
AUTHORITATIVE SPOKESMAN WHO HAS BEEN LACKING ON THE TURKISH
SIDE. IN THIS REGARD, MAVROS NOTED HE THOUGH A CARAMANLIS-ECEVIT
MEETING WOULD SERVE NO PURPOSE, BUT TO THE CONTRARY WOULD
RELEGATE THE ISSUE TO A GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEM RATHER THAN THE
INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM IT IS. MAVROS THOUGHT, ON THE OTHER HAND,
THAT THE MEETING WITH ECEVIT WHICH ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS HAD
PROPOSED COULD BE PRODUCTIVE.

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4. PASOK'S CHIEFTAIN, ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, LABELLED ECEVIT'S
STATEMENT "CHAUVINISTIC" AND CALLED AGAIN (AS HAD MAVROS)
FOR ENDING THE DIALOGUE UNTIL TURKEY RECOGNIZED THE VALIDTTY
OF INTERNATIONAL LAW IN THE AEGEAN, ESPECIALLY THE 1958
GENEVA CONVENTION, AND THERE WAS A TURKISH WITHDRAWAL FROM CYPRUS.
THE SOCIALIST INITIATIVE, A LEFT WING, BREAK-AWAY GROUP FROM
THE UNION OF THE DEOMCRATIC CENTER, CONDEMNED ECEVIT'S POSITION
AND CLAIMED HIS SPEECH HAD BEEN DELIVERED FOR INTERNAL CONSUMPTION.
SECRETARY DRAKOPOULOS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE INTERIOR TOOK
THE LINE THAT TURKISH DESIGNS AGAINST GREECE ARE SUPPORTED BY
THE TURKISH MILITARY--THE DRIVING FORCE IN TURKEY TODAY--AND
DO NOT DEPEND ON THE PARTICULAR POLITICAL PARTY IN OFFICE.

5. COMMENT: CARAMANLIS APPARENTLY FELT HE HAD TO RESPOND IN
KIND TO ECEVIT'S STATEMENT THAT HIS GOVERNMENT "WILL DEFEND
TURKEY'S NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE DISPUTE WITH GREECE..."
WE READ THE STATEMENTS BY "DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS" AND THE GOG'S
WAY OF MAKING IT CLEAR THAT WHILE IT IS INTERESTED IN A
DIALOGUE IT MUST BE A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE AND THIS THE GREEKS SAY,
DEPENDS ON TURKISH SINCERITY AND GOOD FAITH.
KUBISCH

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